

**Charter of the
Cumberland Piedmont
Inventory and Monitoring Network
June 2001**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to describe the basic practices that will be used to plan, organize, manage, and evaluate the Cumberland Piedmont Network "Vital Signs" Monitoring Program. This is pursuant to the intent and purposes of the National Park Service Natural Resource Challenge with respect to the inventory and monitoring of natural resource ecosystem health within the Network.

The Cumberland/Piedmont Network (CUPN) is comprised of 14 units of the National Park System of the 270 units that qualify for Inventory and Monitoring because of their significant natural resources. They include:

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (ABLI)

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (CARL)

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (CHCH)

Cowpens National Battlefield (COWP)

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (CUGA)

Fort Donelson National Battlefield (FODO)

Guilford Courthouse National Military Park (GUCO)

Kings Mountain National Military Park (KIMO)

Little River Canyon National Preserve (LIRI)

Mammoth Cave National Park (MACA)

Ninety Six National Historic Site (NISI)

Russell Cave National Monument (RUCA)

Shiloh National Military Park (SHIL)

Stones River National Battlefield (STRI)

Network member parks are committed to operate and foster an atmosphere of fairness, trust, and respect throughout the Network. They will pursue a holistic approach in defining Network management issues and resources of concern, and in identifying the best locations to monitor these resources, as well as implementing the I&M Program using scientifically credible standards.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is comprised of five Network park Superintendents and the Southeast Region (SER) I&M Coordinator, with one superintendent elected to serve as Chairperson. Board member Superintendents serve for three years, while the Chair serves for two years. Terms are renewable other than the Chair, which rotates off at least one term. At a minimum, one new board member is added from the remaining parks every two years at the time a new chairperson is selected and one sitting member will voluntarily step down, if their three years term has not yet expired. The SER I&M Coordinator is a permanent member of the Board. The SER I&M Coordinator and Chairperson facilitate meetings and communications of members and with all network parks. The CUPN Coordinator and the Mammoth Cave National Park Long-Term Ecological Monitoring (LTEM) Coordinator will serve as advisors to the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (Board) will promote accountability and effectiveness by reviewing progress toward goals, quality controls, and Network expenditures.

The Board will collaborate with the Network Coordinator, Science Advisory Committee, and Network parks' natural resource staffs in the overall design and implementation of vital signs monitoring and in other management activities related to the Natural Resource Challenge.

The Board shall contribute to and decide on strategies and procedures for leveraging Network funds and personnel to best accomplish vital signs monitoring and other natural resource needs of Network parks.

The Board consults on hiring of new personnel using funds provided to the Network and from other funds sources. They will seek additional funding from other sources to leverage Network funds provided through the Servicewide program.

Professional guidance from and partnerships with other individuals and organizations will be solicited by the Board.

Annually, the Board will review and approve the Network Annual Work Plan and associated budget.

Southeast Region I&M Coordinator

The SER I&M Coordinator is a voting member of the Board of Directors. He/she provides the CUPN I&M Coordinator professional and scientific direction and has broad program oversight and coordination responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Southeast Region I&M Coordinator

The role and responsibilities of the SER I&M Coordinator have been fully articulated by the Regional Director's memorandum of December 8, 2000, including the following:

The SER I&M Coordinator is the selecting official and the supervisor of record of the CUPN I&M Coordinator. He/she will be responsible for developing Critical Performance Elements; conducting periodic and annual performance appraisals; administering salary, benefits, leave, and attendance; and all other associated supervisory functions.

The SER I&M Coordinator consults with and obtains the concurrence of the Board of Directors regarding the hiring of specific staff identified in Annual Work Plans and other budget and planning documents.

The SER I&M Coordinator is responsible for timely distribution of funds attributed to the Network through Regional Office accounts. The SER I&M Coordinator will be responsible for the accountability and tracking of all funds allocated to the Network. In this regard, expenditure documents such as DI-1's and other planning documents that require the expenditure of funds must be signed off by the SER I&M Coordinator before the funds can be obligated. This is required in order to provide the Board of Directors with monthly status of funds accounting

and tracking of projects. He/she will consult with the Board of Directors regarding the planned expenditures in any given funding circle.

Cumberland/Piedmont Network I&M Coordinator

The CUPN I&M Coordinator provides overall leadership, management, and coordination of the Network, and consults regularly with the SER I&M Coordinator, Science Advisory Committee, and Board of Directors to ensure efficient program management.

The CUPN I&M Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the administrative record of the Network, including project direction and funding.

The CUPN I&M Coordinator and subordinate staff are duty stationed at Mammoth Cave National Park (host park) and conduct the Network program from the host park, unless otherwise directed and approved by the Board of Directors. The CUPN I&M Coordinator is the Chief Scientist for the Network and provides leadership in the development and implementation of inventory and monitoring protocols and special studies, and ensures scientifically credible products as programs outcomes.

It is expected that the CUPN I&M Coordinator and subordinate staff will conduct a major portion of project business at other Network parks relative to the approved study plans by the Board for "Vital Signs monitoring.

Responsibilities of the Cumberland/Piedmont Network I&M Coordinator

The CUPN I&M Coordinator is responsible for the development, management, and operation of the Network, with oversight and supervision by the SER I&M Coordinator and approval of the Board of Directors.

Subordinate Network program staff will be hired, supervised, and administratively supported by the CUPN I&M Coordinator with concurrence from the SE Regional I&M Coordinator as supervisor and the BOD.

The CUPN I&M Coordinator is directly supervised by the SER I&M Coordinator and consults with the Science Advisory Committee to prepare a Network Annual Work Plan and

associated budget for approval by the Board of Directors. He/she is responsible for managing funds allocated to the Network Program from a variety of sources, and is accountable for the appropriate expenditure of same following appropriate policies, laws, and regulations.

The Network I&M Coordinator serves as Chair of the Science Advisory Committee meetings and coordinates Committee business.

Science Advisory Committee

The technical Science Advisory Committee is comprised of natural resource managers and scientist, including scientists from outside the National Park Service. The Committee will include the CUPN I&M Coordinator; Mammoth Cave LTEM Coordinator; park natural resource managers; and a minimum of two scientist with knowledge of sampling procedures, monitoring techniques, and statistical methods that will serve as reviewers to evaluate conceptual designs, monitoring strategies, and ecological relevance of monitoring proposals. Committee membership will be approved by the Board of Directors.

This Charter makes provision for and recognizes the opportunity to create a joint Network Science Advisory Committee or like body to serve more than one network. The Board of Directors will actively consider and vote on any such proposals.

Responsibilities of the Science Advisory Committee

The Committee will advise the Board of Directors and Network parks on the development of the Network monitoring Plan and identification of monitoring objectives by:

- Compiling and summarizing existing information about park resources and the findings and recommendations of scoping workshops;

- assisting in the development of a network monitoring strategy;

- assisting in the selection of indicator species communities, and processes for "Vital Signs;"
- evaluating initial sampling designs, methods, and protocols to assure they are scientifically credible;

participating in the development of the Annual Work Plan and Annual Reports;

reviewing annual data reports, I&M deliverables, and otherwise acting as a peer science review group; and

developing materials for and facilitating the Five Year Program Review.

Products and recommendations of the Science Advisory Committee will be presented to the Board of Directors for discussion, modification, or approval. When necessary, the CUPN I&M Coordinator may recommend to the Board of Directors the formation of groups of scientist or specialists from within or outside the Science Advisory Committee to accomplish specific studies/tasks. No such group is formed without inclusion of a specific "sunset" provision.

Each year the Science Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors will prepare a budget for the Committee including travel, per diem, and other costs associated with the conduct of Committee meetings. Science Advisory Committee costs are summarized in the Network Annual Work Plan.

Procedures

Board of Directors Meetings

The BOD conducts at least one meeting annually. The CUPN Coordinator publishes an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting and is responsible for publishing the minutes of the meeting. At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, the Board will decide the date and location of the next annual meeting.

Any of the 14 Network Superintendents may raise issues to the BOD and any may participate in conference calls or discussions.

The Board may conduct special meetings and use telephone conferences to deal with discussion or decision topics as necessary. The Network Coordinator is responsible for arranging annual meetings, special meetings, and telephone conferences of the Board of Directors and for publishing the minutes. The Network will pay for costs associated

with conducting the annual meeting and may pay for other appropriate network meetings if needed.

Conference calls will be arranged with no less than 48 hours notice, providing the issues and intent of the calls have been provided to the Board. Any designated alternate will also be sent notice of a special meeting or conference call.

Simple business matters and other easily resolved issues and decisions are delegated to the Network Coordinator in consultation with an available board member for decision.

Alternates and Quorums

Any Network Superintendent who cannot attend or otherwise participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors may assign an alternate. Network Superintendents may not serve as alternates nor carry the proxies of other Superintendents. A simple majority of the members at a special meeting or conference call, including any member that responds to an email question within a required deadline constitutes a quorum.

Decision-Making

Decisions of the Board of Directors are made by consensus. If the Board cannot reach a consensus, decision on the matter, along with all viewpoints, will be referred to the Regional Chief, Science and Resource Management, for arbitration. If the matter cannot be resolved through arbitration, it will be referred to the regional Director for resolution.

Network Funding

Inventory and Monitoring program funds are made available to the Network as directed through the Annual Work Plan. Multi-park funded activities are distributed from Regional Office accounts under control of the SER I&M Coordinator. All I&M funds must be strictly accounted for by the SER I&M Coordinator using a discrete Program Work Element (PWE) code and disclosed in the Annual Report Appendix. The Network Board of Directors will be responsible for allocating, approving, tracking, and reporting Network funds and all other funds contributed by parks, other NPS programs, and/or other sources. The Network I&M

Coordinator under the direction of the SER I&M Coordinator will track and account for all expenditures.

Monitoring Plan

A monitoring plan that identifying what, how, and where a resource will be monitored is prepared by the Network I&M Coordinator in consultation with the Science Advisory Committee and the SER I&M Coordinator for approval by the Board of Directors. The initial Monitoring Plan will be completed by December 31, 2003.

Annual Work Planning and Reporting

The CUPN Coordinator, in consultation with the Science Advisory Committee and other designated subgroups, prepares and presents a proposed Annual Work Plan to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval no later than November 30th each year. Annual Work Plans will identify proposed and actual accomplishments and products, responsible individuals, cooperators, partners, funding from all sources, and a budget.

Annual Report

The CUPN I&M Coordinator, in consultation with the Science Advisory Committee and other designated subgroups, prepares and presents a draft Annual Report to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval on or before November 30th each year. Annual Reports detail specific accomplishments, products, lessons learned, coordination with others, and a budget summary. A detailed accounting of all CUPN I&M program funds allocated to each park and office will be appended to and made part of the Annual report. The Annual Report will be published by the CUPN I&M Coordinator for distribution no later than December 31 of each year.

Five Year Program Review

At the end of Fiscal Year 2006, and every five years thereafter, the Network will undertake a comprehensive program review. The review shall be conducted by National Park Service specialists at the national and regional levels, and may involve qualified independent specialists from other agencies and organizations. The purpose of these reviews is to evaluate accomplishments, products, and

protocols used for gathering data, data management, fiscal management, and staffing. Program Reviews provide the basis for any significant changes in program direction or reassignment of resources to any park or office.

Coordination

The Board of Directors will need to maintain close working relationships with the natural resources staffs of Network parks, the Science Advisory Committee, the SER I&M Coordinator, and the CUPN I&M Coordinator. All Board of Directors meetings are open to all of these parties. Members of the Board of Directors and the Executive Board are encouraged to participate in and/or keep informed with respect to the work of the Science Advisory Committee. The CUPN I&M Coordinator provides regular briefings to the Board of Directors by memoranda, electronic mail, or telephone.

The Regional I&M Coordinator keeps in regular contact with the Science Advisory Committee, and the Mammoth Cave LTEM Coordinator through the Network I&M Coordinator.

Partnerships

The Network I&M Program works with others to achieve its "Vital Signs" inventory and monitoring goals. The Cumberland/Piedmont Network cooperates with other agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

Special efforts will be made to partner with the Biological Resources Division (BRD) of the U.S. Geological Survey, and with the Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU) of the University of Tennessee, the Karst Studies Unit of Western Kentucky University, and The Nature Conservancy.

It is understood that the Cumberland/Piedmont Network I&M Program may evolve to include other land and resource managers (Federal, State, Tribal) in the Cumberland/Piedmont biogeographic area. The Network charter may be amended to identify the conditions under which membership in the Board of Directors may be expanded to include non-National Park Service participants. In no case will this be done without unanimous approval of the Board.

Relationship with Mammoth Cave Long-Term Ecological Monitoring (LTEM) Prototype Program

It was recognized early on that the tremendous variability among parks in ecological conditions, sizes, and management capabilities represent significant problems for any attempt to institutionalize ecological monitoring throughout the Service. To develop monitoring expertise throughout this range of ecological and managerial diversity, natural resource park units were grouped into 10 major biogeographic areas or biomes, and one park unit from each major biome was then selected to serve as a prototype for that biome. Mammoth Cave National Park (MACA) was chosen as a prototype park for its unique karst resources. Design and testing of monitoring protocols at MACA has begun and will include scientists at MACA as well as from the BRD of the U.S. Geological Survey.

As a karst ecosystem prototype park, Mammoth Cave National Park was chosen to serve as a "Center of Excellence." Prototype monitoring programs were established in an attempt to learn how to design scientifically credible and cost-effective monitoring programs in ecological settings where they are located. MACA will design, develop, and test monitoring protocols and conduct in-depth research that may have value to the Network monitoring program.

Because of these circumstances, Mammoth Cave National Park will be the 'host park' for the Cumberland/Piedmont Inventory and Monitoring Network. As long as Network program objectives are met, Mammoth Cave will provide facilities and house program functions as the principal Network site. In order to maintain program stability, the Network program may not be moved to an alternate site without the approval of the Board of Directors. Provision will be made by the Network to fund/reimburse Mammoth Cave for customary utilities, custodial service, and maintenance of the facilities, provided further infrastructure funds are not requested. These costs will be shown in the Annual Work Plan budget.

The Mammoth Cave LTEM program as part of the Natural Resource Challenge funds will provide much needed technical advice dealing with monitoring protocols as they are

developed. Mentoring services will be provided to the Network I&M Program on a variety of technical issues related to monitoring including conceptual design, database management, data integration and analysis.

Amendments

The Board of Directors may make amendments to the Charter at any time.

Approval Signatures

Superintendent, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace
National Historic Site (ABLI)

Date

Superintendent, Carl Sandburg Home National
Historic Site (CARL)

Date

Superintendent, Chickamauga and Chattanooga
National Military Park (CHCH)

Date

Superintendent, Cowpens National Battlefield
(COWP)

Date

Superintendent, Cumberland Gap National
Historical Park (CUGA)

Date

Superintendent, Fort Donelson National
Battlefield (FODO)

Date

Superintendent, Guilford Courthouse National
Military Park (GUCO)

Date

Superintendent, Kings Mountain National
Military Park (KIMO)

Date

Superintendent, Little River Canyon National
Preserve (LIRI)

Date

Superintendent, Mammoth Cave National Park (MACA)

Date

Superintendent, Ninety Six National Historic
Site (NISI)

Date

Superintendent, Russell Cave National Monument
(RUCA)

Date

Superintendent, Shiloh National Military Park
(SHIL)

Date

Superintendent, Stones River National Battlefield
(STRI)

Date

Regional Coordinator Inventory and Monitoring
(SERO)

Date

Regional Director, Southeast Region
(SERO)

Date

National Inventory and Monitoring Coordinator
(WASO)

Date

Associate Director, Natural Resources
(WASO)

Date